Letters to the editor

Refutes lone-assassin premise in JFK murder

Editor, Beverly Times:

The latest move in the game of Clay Shaw & Federal Government vs Jim Garrison & State of Louisiana has produced a 16-page secret report by four doctors just in time for use by Shaw's defnse i nhis conspiracy trial set for Jan. 21.

Anticipating Garrison's subpoena of the JFK autopsy photographs and X-rays, Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark last spring authorized an examination of those hitherto secret documents and has now released the "Backstop" Report to Judge Charles Halleck in Washington, D.C.

The excerpted quotation published in the Boston Herald-Traveler Jan. 17, 1969, indicates exactly what one would expect from a new team of experts organized by and for one side of the argument. No man who agreed to work directly under the auspices of the Attorney General of the United States is about to produce evidence contrary to the truth already established by the Chief Justice of the United States unless he considers the salt mines of nether Siberia the ideal homesite for his retirement.

Corroboration of the Warren Report on the assassination of President Kennedy only adds four more experts to the list of those who publicly endorse its political version of the truth. This particular variant is irrevocably based on the untenable lone-assassin premise and its unrealistic companying obligato, the single-bullet theory.

This conglomeration of unadulterated rot, itself the best possible reason in favor of conspiracy, has already been ruled inadmissable as evidence in court. It is the latest ploy of professional backstopping in a small-minded attempt to insinuate that Garrison's investigation is the brainchild of a demented, publicity mad power-happy mental misfit who just happens to be popular enough to be elected district attorney of Orleans Parish and smart enough to bring Clay Shaw to trial for conspiring to assassinate the President of the United States.

The lone-assassin premise does not hold water on at least a dozen counts. Oswald was a lousy shot; he never held any firing practice; the rifle itself

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was inaccurate; it was never proven to be his; he did not bring it into the TSBD building where he worked; the ammo down three flights of stairs to ever traced to his possession; the telescopic sight was not aligned with the rifle's bore; the rifle's clumsy bolt-action severly mitigated against even the nation's best shots scoring three bullseyes in six seconds; the sixth-floor "assassin's nest" was too cramped to lie, kneel, sit or stand and fire accurately from a firm position; there was not enough time for Oswald to shoot, hide the rifle diagonally across the building and then run down three flights of stairs to the second-floor lunchroom where he was found with an open coke bottle in hand by a Dallas policeman who had rushed into the building and up one flight immediately after the shooting; finally, the majority of the witnesses in Dealey Plaza thought the shots came from the grassy knoll ahead of the motorcade, not from the building behind it.

In short, as Garrison has stated, Oswald was a patsy as he himself yelled above the din at police headquarters some hours later.

The single-bullet theory to which the four new experts are now wedded holds that the first bullet to hit JFK traversed his lower neck, exited alongside his necktie, yawed in mid-flight on its way to hitting Texas Governor Connally in the back, traversed the governor's chest, shattered his fifth rib, broke his right wrist and wounded his left thigh. In order to perform this miraculous maneuver, the bullet, known as CE 399 (CE stands for Commission Exhibit), also had to first zig hard right, then zag hard left even as it yawed in the air between the President and the governor because the men were not both in its line of flight.

Furthermore, because the sixth-floor window was some 60-feet above the limousine, CE 399 while zigging, yawing and zagging had to climb to the proper height to hit the governor's back just left of his right armpit at a downward flight-angle of 25 degrees.

The finale to this whimsical bit of ballistical choreography finds CE 399 45 minutes later ignominiously rolling out from under a mattress on a stretcher in the Parkland Hospital over three miles away from the assassination site. Believe it or not little 'ol' CE 399 was virtually unscathed, unscarred, undented, unwisted, unblunted, even unbloodied and had lost only 2.5 grains of its original weight of 160-161 grains.

These basic ingredients of the Warren Commission's farce, "How to Apprehend an Assassin without even Trying," constitute the logic with which the four doctors must now live in warm, glowing companinship with the chief justice, his fellow commissioners, the staff, J. Edgar Hoover and the overwhelming majority of the nation's newspaper scribes and radio/TV commentators.

Merriman Smith's article to the contrary (Beverly Times, Jan. 17, 1969), the autopsy photographs and x-rays were seen only by those who processed them and possibly by Robert Kennedy, who kept them for the Kennedy family until October, 1966, when they were incarcerated as secret documents in the commission's section of the National Archives Building. The autopsy doctors did not have them during testimony before the commission; they were never admitted as evidence; no member of the commission or the staff ever studied them and the public may get a peek at them in 1971, but don't hold your breath. The year 2038 is more the mark.

The attorney general's performance, using respectable professionals to reiterate what is now commonly considered a monumental blunder, is an insult to the entire world. If the autopsy photographs and X-rays show what he and the backstoppers say they do, let the documents speak for themselves. The informed, the uninformed, the intelligent and the unintelligent do not need another panel of experts to evaluate what the camera has recorded. The JFK autopsy photographs and X-rays should be published now, not in 1971 or 2038, and Judge Halleck should so rule.

If the lone assassin premise and the single-bullet theory are not supported by these documents, this new evidence should be used forthwith to assist Garrison in apprehending the conspirators, and Judge Halleck should so rule. No plethora of pronunciatos by no matter how many respectable men will succeed like the truth.

Anyone interested in assisting the National Committee to Investigate Assassinations (NCIA), which has just named Garrison to its board of directors, please contact the writer in Manchester.

R. B. Cutler
Boardman avenue
Manchester

Herald